Payment for using transponders

3964. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Space has asked Prasar Bharati Corporation to pay for using its transponders;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken to realise the dues?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) INSAT capacity of Department of Space is being utilized by Prasar Bharati (Doordarshan & All India Radio) for more than 15 years. It is only in the financial year 2001-02, the Department of Space (DoS) has asked for the payment of user charges from Prasar Bharati for an amount of Rs. 144 crores for 2001-02 and Rs. 172 crores for 2002-03 towards the payment of 22 INSAT Transponders allotted to the Ministry of I & B.

(c) The Ministry of I & B has taken up the matter with the Department of Space and stated that Prasar Bharati is a Public Broadcaster and its commercial revenue is incidental and forms only a small proportion of its expenditure. It is largely funded by the Government. In view of the present mandate of social commitment of Prasar Bharati it would be desirable to resolve the matter through Inter-ministerial consultations.

Functioning of FM Radio stations in Karnataka

3965. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the places where FM radio stations are at present functioning in Karnataka;

(b) how many FM radio stations have been sanctioned for Karnataka during 2002-2003;

(c) the places where they are going to be started; and

(d) the amount allocated for the construction of these new FM radio stations in Karnataka during 2002-2003?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (d) The